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time to look at the figure. There are more black than white dots, and so Shipman's victims were mainly women. The bar chart on the right of the picture shows that most of his victims were in their 70s and 80s, but looking at the scatter of points reveals that although initially they were all elderly, some younger cases crept in as the years went by. The bar chart at the top clearly shows a gap around 1992 when there were no murders. It turned out that before that time Shipman had been working in a joint practice with other doctors but then, possibly as he felt under suspicion, he left to form a single-handed general practice. After this his activities accelerated, as demonstrated by the top bar chart.

This analysis of the victims identified by the inquiry raises further questions about the way he committed his murders. Some statistical evidence is provided by data on the time of day of the death of his supposed victims, as recorded on the death certificate. Figure 0.2 is a line graph comparing the times of day that Shipman's patients died to the times that a sample of patients of other local family doctors died. The pattern does not require subtle analysis: the conclusion is sometimes known as 'inter-ocular', since it hits you between the eyes. Shipman's patients tended overwhelmingly to die in the early afternoon.

The data cannot tell us why they died at that time, but further

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